



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## SPANISH IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

---

CARRIE E. TUCKER DRACASS  
Englewood High School

---

Whatever may be said in favor of the teaching of other modern foreign languages in general will apply with equal force to the teaching of this language, so there is nothing strictly new or original to be said upon the present tendency from the stand-points of pedagogy and practice. Spanish has found its way into a number of schools in the large cities and towns and the interest in the subject is rapidly growing. It is taught in the Central High School and in the Manual Training School in St. Louis; in the Dupont Manual Training School in Louisville, and, I am told, that in the Kansas City high schools courses are offered. This is also true of the colleges and many of the private schools in southern California, New Mexico, and Arizona. Professor E. C. Hills, Colorado Springs, is authority for the statement that in New Mexico it is taught in several important private schools, and that a number of periodicals in the Spanish language are published. He places the Spanish-speaking population in Colorado at 50,000, and in New Mexico at 125,000.<sup>1</sup>

Nearly twenty years ago my attention was first attracted to the study of Spanish by the demand then made for "correspondents" capable of answering business letters. Then Spain

<sup>1</sup>*New Mexican Spanish*, "Publications of Modern Language Association," 1906.

Since this paper was written a letter has been received from Professor E. C. Hills, in which he makes the following statement: "In the high schools of Colorado Spanish now holds a place more important than French, but less so than German; and it is being introduced into more schools every year. In our colleges here and on the Pacific coast, we find it necessary to make Spanish very difficult, perhaps the most difficult, modern language work, in order to keep down the number of students. . . . To the south of us Spanish is the only language spoken for thousands of miles. Even in New Mexico English has gotten a foothold only in a few places, such as Albuquerque, Roswell, *et al.*"

and the Spanish-speaking countries of South America furnished the bulk of the business requiring a knowledge of this language. There was at that time some demand in Mexico and farther south for teachers with normal training who had a working knowledge of Spanish sufficient to enable them to teach in those countries. My first teacher of Spanish was a woman who had done just this work. As Chicago has become more and more the center of large and varied business interests, the demand for Spanish correspondents has increased. The need must be met. There are our interests in Cuba, in the Philippines, in Mexico, to be considered. In the latter country the development of the rubber industry is no small factor in the increasing amount of business communication between the two countries. A larger number of Americans from all parts of the states are not only spending their vacation days sight-seeing, but are becoming interested in a business way in the Latin-American countries and are settling down there. More and more the better class of native tradesmen are sending to the states for articles with which to meet the wants of their customers. In short, the constantly increasing intercourse between these countries and the United States requires that, as a mere business proposition, Spanish be taught for the benefit of our students commercially inclined or intending to enter upon a clerical career.

Here some statistics may help us to understand the relative importance of French and German, the two modern languages generally taught in our high schools, and Spanish. They are taken from a book entitled *Spanish Commercial Practice* connected with the export and import trade to and from Spain, the Spanish colonies, and the countries where Spanish is the recognized language of commerce, by James Graham, secretary for higher education, city of Leeds, England (published by the Macmillan Co.). French is spoken by a total of 45,000,000 people, German, by 80,000,000, 10,000,000 of whom are in the United States. Spanish is the language of 50,000,000, to be found in Spain, northern Africa, Mexico, Central America, South America (except Brazil), West Indies, and the Philippines. The Spanish-speaking peoples occupy territory the total

area of which is second only to that occupied by English-speaking peoples.

The *World Almanac* gives as the total value of all imports into the United States in 1906, \$1,226,563,843, of which \$214,303,208 came from Spain, Mexico, South America, and Central America. The exports from the United States were \$1,717,953,382, of which \$181,245,180 went to the countries just mentioned.

Considering the amount of business indicated by these figures, it should not seem strange that young men and women now engaged in clerical work in downtown offices are taking up the study of this language. The subject is now offered in the Chicago night schools. Within the last few years some have taken advantage of these courses and have obtained sufficient command of the language to enable them to take care of the Spanish-correspondence of their firms, and in consequence have found themselves in receipt of larger salaries.

The programmes filed in the office of the superintendent of the Chicago public schools the first week in December, 1907, show that Spanish is taught in three day high schools, with a total enrolment in these classes of ninety-nine; it is taught in three night high schools, with a total enrolment in these classes of fifty. The classes have, in the Normal Extension Department (for the teachers in the city schools), a total enrolment of forty-three.

Inquiries made in this city disclosed some interesting facts: (1) There are comparatively few people actually employed in the offices who can do the work in Spanish, and they are well paid; (2) there are but few interpreters—in some cases these are native Mexicans who can use the English for conversation purposes but find the written English more difficult; (3) that there is a steadily increasing demand for this kind of work, and good returns.

Hon. Elihu Root, secretary of state, has an article entitled "South America—Our Opportunity" in *System*, January, 1907. "Certain practical things," he says, "must be done. Both for the purpose of learning what the South American people want and of

securing their attention to your goods you must have agents who speak the Spanish or Portuguese language." An interpreter is not so successful, neither can the North American succeed through the interpreter in establishing the "agreeable personal relation which is so potent in leading to business relations."

But it is contended that Spain has never taken the prominent part in the history of civilization that Germany or France has; she has no such mass of literature; has tried no great educational experiments; has not delved so deeply into the secrets of science. Part of this may be admitted; and, were you to read an article by E. Gomez de Baquero, "La España Moderna," translated for the *Living Age* in 1901, you would easily be discouraged in your efforts to find any Spanish literature "worth while." He says that French is the language most generally known among their educated people; that they are dominated by certain foreign influences, but he has a hopeful note, for the "period of literary production coincides with moments of political and social fermentation, with the struggle for ideas."

Recent developments have shown that his hope was not without foundation. *Aldea Perdida* (Palacio Valdés) has been called a "real poem in epic tones," into which are introduced customs, scenery, local characters. Señor Henrich, a Spanish publisher, has undertaken a *Biblioteca de Novelistas del Siglo XX*, a collection of tales which "show the direction of ideas and the amount of artistic independence prevalent among the youth of Spain," at the present time. The labor problem, a "feeling for nature in a form novel among Spaniards," a revived interest in the study of Cervantes and in the representative works of their earlier literature, the relations between America and Spain, the political temper of the times, the inner life of a university are topics which have found their way into the current literature of Spain. Recently many charming stories of Spanish life and manners have been published in a form both handy and inexpensive for schoolroom use.

Spanish America has also done its share of work in the literary field. In Mexico in the sixteenth century the printing press was set up, the University of Mexico was opened, and

later, in the same century, a literary contest was held at which a prize was offered for the best poetical work. To the latter part of the sixteenth century belongs the dramatist Alarcón, of Mexico; to the nineteenth century, Bello, born in Venezuela, who became minister to England, and finally rector of the University of Santiago de Chile; although a poet he is best known, perhaps, by his grammar, which is still a standard work.

Brander Matthews, in an article on the Spanish drama in the *International Quarterly*, '03, says:

The Spanish language is a rich and sonorous language as characteristic of the race that speaks it as is English or French; and in the hands of the dramatic poets Spanish lends itself to the display of an eloquence which only too often sinks into facile grandiloquence. . . . Formal and pompous [the speakers in the drama] their speech is an occasion, and at other times it is easy and natural, refreshing in its humorous lightness, sparkling with unpremeditated wit, and bristling with pungent proverbs.

These facts and quotations indicate that Spain is waking up in these later years to a new realization of herself and her past, and the great part she played in the exploration and settlement of the New World, and in that older history which extends far back into the days before ever Greece and Rome had reached the zenith of their power.